

**Board of Studies
25th Meeting**

18th September 2008, Chancellors Hotel and Conference Centre, Manchester

Minutes

Present

Nick Allen, Amanda Ashley, Catherine Lillie, Mike Miller, Ann Morton (Chair), Alison Robinson, Mariken Schipper, Joyce Tate, Helen Thomas, Bob Westaway

Apologies

Nigel Beasley, Terry Bransbury, Marion Cartwright, Louise Cole, Adam Cresswell, William Mortimer

01.25 Minutes

Confirmed:

- minutes of the previous meeting with one amendment- Mike Miller was listed as both present and absent- he wasn't actually present at the meeting

Matters Arising:

- (1) (01.24.9) The mentor refreshing exercise has now been completed. Most current 'inactive' mentors were keen to re-engage with the programme.
- (2) (04.24) Monitoring of fails across the marking criteria is ongoing.
- (3) (05.24) The amendments to the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form have been made and forms are being used for applicants for the 2008-09 academic year. A similar form is now also being used for AUA members which may enable future comparisons between the profile of the PgCert and the membership more broadly.
- (4) (06.24) The refunds procedure will go to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.
- (5) (07.24) The date, venue and composition of the Preliminary Revalidation Panel have yet to be confirmed.
- (6) (08.24.2.b.ii) The timings of the Assessment Boards and assessment deadlines are being reviewed in conjunction with the academic calendar.
- (7) (08.24.3) The Assessment Review Group will meet in October or November 2008 and will provide a progress report to the next Board.

Action: Programme Manager

02.25 Terms of Reference and Membership

Received:

- the Terms of Reference of the Board
- the current membership of the Board

Noted:

(1) That the Board of Trustees are currently in transition and that although there are two current members of the Board of Studies who are also members of the Board of Trustees, this needs to be formalised in the Terms of Reference.

Resolved:

(1) The Academic Registrar position and second Board of Trustees link position would be recommended to Board of Trustees at their next meeting.

Action: Programme Manager/National Office

03.25 External Examiners Report**(1) Received:**

- the reports from the External Examiners and draft responses.

Reported:

(1) both examiners had noted a number of positive aspects to the programme including endorsement of the assignment questions and new structure and confidence in the feedback provided to participants.

Noted:

- (2) the examiners felt that in some assignments, structure was lacking and some participants were overly reliant on internal sources.
- (3) one examiner had noted that there was a lack of clarity over the role of the mentor in relation to assessment.

Resolved:

The formal responses to the External Examiners were approved with minor amendments.

Action: Programme Manager

04.25 Annual Report**Received:**

- the draft Annual Programme Evaluation for 2007-08 for OUVS

Noted:

- that it was a good report showing that the programme was in a good position.
- that there were no complaints or appeals during 2007-08 which was a testament to the programme structure and management.

Resolved:

- that it was still too early to discern any trends in the data from the new version of the programme.
- that the programme specification would be discussed at the next Board.

Action: Programme Manager

05.25 Revalidation**Received:**

- the draft Critical Appraisal document for Revalidation 2009

Resolved:

- (1) the Board agreed to send any comments on the report to the Programme Manager by 10 October. The report will then go to the next Board of Trustees meeting.

Action: Board members / Programme Manager

06.25 Annual Participant, Mentor and Graduate Monitoring**Received:**

- the summary report of the annual participant and mentor questionnaire

Noted:

- (1) the response rate was much higher than previous years due to the introduction of new survey software and following a review after last year's monitoring exercise.
- (2) that a new section would be added to Section 1 of the summary report to look at actions arising and actions taken as a result of the feedback.

Resolved:

- (1) a summary of outcomes will be published on the website and in *Newslink*.
- (2) the Training Team will consider any issues which need to be addressed in the training.

Action: Programme Management Team / Training Team

07.25 Guidance Notes**Received:**

- five draft guidance notes for participants and mentors

Noted:

- (1) that the Guidance Notes would be an excellent addition to the current guidance available to participants and mentors
- (2) that the issues covered in the Notes were in response to participant and mentor feedback
- (3) that three further Guidance Notes would be produced by Christmas 2008. These will be circulated to Board members for comment and approved by Chair's Action.

Resolved:

- (1) individual comments on the Guidance Notes should be sent to the Programme Manager by Friday 10 October.
- (2) that following amendments, the Guidance Notes would be published to participants and mentors.

Action: Board members / Programme Manager

08.25 Reports

Reports from -

- (1) Participants representative

Reported:

- (a) The following feedback was reported:

- (i) that participants found the Study Days helpful. They would however value more emphasis on study skills in the Study Days and advice on forming study groups.
 - (ii) that despite previous feedback, many participants would like a third study day in the second year.
 - (iii) that the mentoring system works very well
 - (iv) that participants would value an academic tutor to discuss their assignments with.
 - (v) that a chat facility on the website would be welcomed by many participants.
 - (vi) that there was some concern over the length of time that the members only section of the website had been offline.
 - (vii) that participants who had attended the Annual Conference had found it very useful. Participants from smaller institutions would welcome financial support to enable them to attend Conference.
 - (viii) that examples of past assignments would be very useful for participants on the new version of the programme.
 - (ix) that some participants had commented on the good help and support provided by the Programme Manager.
- (b) In response to the participant concerns:
- (i) it was noted that the content of the Study Days continues to be reviewed annually by the Training Team and that the flexible content of the Development Days can cover study skills. The Training Team had decided in their recent meeting that further information on forming study groups would be included in Study Day 1. Additionally, information on this had been provided in the June Quarterly Bulletins.
 - (ii) due to feedback from 2007-08 it had been decided that a compulsory third study day would not be provided, however a voluntary study day will be offered to participants during their second year on the programme.
 - (iii) that AUA was currently recruiting an E-Services Manager. Part of their remit is to review and develop the online resources for the PgCert, which will include online discussion facilities. In the meantime, participants are encouraged to use the jiscmail lists to email other participants. The new online area will also include examples of past assignments and a number of such assignments have already been identified for uploading.
 - (iv) that there had been some implementation problems with the new online portal for members which had caused the delay. Until it is fixed, AUA will try to find an alternative online area for participants to access the information they need. Some course documentation, such as the Programme Handbook, is available in the Files Store on the Jiscmail list pages.
 - (v) that AUA continues to review the costs of Conference and how to enable members to attend, and that it remains competitively priced.

Action: Programme Manager / National Office

(2) Mentor Representative**Reported:**

- (a) The following feedback was reported:
 - (i) one mentor was concerned about a lack of contact from their mentee and was uncertain how the mentees status would be communicated to them.
 - (ii) one mentor was keen to take on further mentees but was unsure whether they could contact the National Office to request this.
- (b) In response to the concerns raised:
 - (i) some participants, particularly on the old version of the programme do lose contact with their mentor. In these situations, mentors are encouraged to contact the National Office. When participants intermit, request an extension, submit work for assessment or withdraw from the programme, the mentor would be informed by the Programme Manager.
 - (ii) mentors are encouraged to inform the National Office if they are able to take on new mentees. There may not be instant opportunities but it is useful to have full information.

09.25 Programme Management Team**Received:**

- an oral update from the Programme Management Team

Reported:

- (1) There was no business to report.

10.25 Other Business**Noted:**

- (1) The current OUVS Partnerships Manager, Victoria Korzeniowska, would be leaving OUVS in December. A new Partnerships Manager will be appointed in due course.

11.24 Dates of next meetings

- 26th meeting: 29th January 2009, London
- 27th meeting: 28th May 2009, Manchester